

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Brooke Cheney, from Harwinton CT. I am a victim of violence. I was bullied in school, starting at 9 years old. I started getting raped by upper classmen at 13 years old. I know what violence is. I know that the act of violence has little to do with the weapon of choice for the bad actors who do violence. I have had a knife held to my neck and my life threatened more than once.

I am also a mom. So when my kids were 5 and 6 and the Sandy Hook elementary school was attacked, I wept for all who lost their lives. I wept for weeks, until I decided I needed to find out for myself, **what really does help prevent violence?** The media certainly had a lot to say about what causes violence, it's guns – big, black, scary, guns. I had been a victim of violence and there were no guns involved. Violence is an act, not a weapon.

For over a decade, I have been testifying. For over a decade, I keep coming back with the same hope that maybe, this time, you will actually use some of the **PROVEN research** that helps prevent violence and crime. Yet here we are again, talking about creating more bureaucracy, banning more guns, and doing very little to actually help. Out of the 35 sections of the 52 pages of the Governor's Bill No. 16, only two focus on gun violence prevention.

How many more have to die in GUN FREE ZONES before you look at the studies that the Department of Education and Secret Service did, stating that most school shooters are cowards and look for the highest body count by targeting gun free zones?

When are you going to look at the actual FBI crime statistics that show that the rifles you are so eager to ban, are barely a blip in the statistics gathered nationally or in CT?

I am not a violent person. The bugs in my house get caught and put outside. All life is precious. According to these bills, the idea that I would buy more than one gun in a month or have a gun that has certain features, I should be violent or possibly a threat.

Education has been shown to be the way to safety when it comes to guns. In 2006 I had my 1st child. I realized I needed training so that I would not be the person who causes harm by accident. I went from knowing nothing about guns and afraid to touch one, to becoming an instructor and sponsored competitive shooter.

As a legislator, you have a difficult job. This is just one of the many hearings that you will attend during this session. Even just today some of you are going from hearing to hearing. You are expected to wade through countless bills and make educated decisions. I ask that you pay attention to the facts that are put forth and avoid the temptation to "*do something*" just because you feel it *might* help.

Thank you for your hard work and determination to make Connecticut a better place to live for all, not just the people who think the way that you do.

In closing I ask that you **vote no** on the Governor's bill as it currently stands.

Vote No on Raised Bill No. 5416

Vote Yes on Raised Bill No. 388, Raised Bill No. 5415, and Raised Bill No. 5412

Brooke Cheney

[DC Project](#) State Director

Mom, Wife, Daughter

Firearms Training Counselor

Suicide Prevention Advocate

Competitive Shooter

CCDL Member

[Owner of A Great Start Shooting School](#)

[FBI Violent Crime](#)

[FBI Stats for the past 10 years](#)

United States Secret Service and Dept of Education - [Safe School Initiative](#)

[The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\)](#) involves national, State, and local public and private agencies working together to prevent and reduce the consequences of childhood exposure to violence.

[CDC Violence Prevention Guide](#)

More programs can be found at [Save Thousands Not Just One](#)